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ABSTRACT

Within the literature on special education administration in rural areas three topics emerge: difficulties associated with bringing special education programs to rural areas; need for research pertaining to special education in rural areas; and a concern with cooperative arrangements as a means of providing special education programs in rural areas. Initially cooperatives appear to be a cure-all for the problem of administering special education programs in rural areas. However, on closer examination, it becomes apparent that cooperatives are plagued with difficulties and may fail to provide adequate services to handicapped children. When all potential difficulties are considered, the efficacy of cooperatives is questionable and the need for continued research becomes apparent. Throughout the literature, seven cooperative models arise: state plans; special school districts; formal intermediate units; true, satellite, and joint agreement cooperatives; and school study councils. Of these seven models, only the true cooperative and the satellite cooperative appear to possess all the components deemed necessary for the successful administration of special education programs in rural areas. However, neither model is free from accompanying difficulties. Consequently, the choice of administrative model must remain situation specific, and careful monitoring to insure efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness to local school district needs is recommended. (NQA)

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Administration of Special Education Programs in Rural Areas: A Review of the Literature

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The passage of PL94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, brought with it a burgeoning of cooperative arrangements for the provision and administration of special education programs in rural areas. The reason behind this unprecedented growth was twofold. First, handicapped children could no longer be denied a free appropriate public education. Since the provision of adequate special education services within an individual rural school district was often unfeasible because of the widely scattered and extremely diverse special education population, and inadequate resources, cooperative arrangements seemed a logical alternative. Second, the requirement that each application for PL94-142 monies be for a minimum of $7500 fostered collaboration. Many small rural school districts were unable individually to generate sufficient allocations to receive these funds. Consequently, cooperative arrangements grew rapidly in sparsely populated areas.

Currently, some form of regional cooperative education arrangement exists in 33 of the states in this country. They differ however in size, role, and structure. Cooperative arrangements may include as few as 7 or as many as 81 districts. In addition, they vary in type of service rendered and professional personnel employed. Some cooperatives serve entirely as advisory agencies, while others are extremely regulatory. Special education services are generally included within the cooperative arrangement, often forming the primary service goal.

Economy of scale is often presented as the rationale for cooperative arrangements in rural areas. Such arrangements permit a wider range of special education services to be offered more efficiently and effectively than would be possible in a single district. Specialized personnel are also shared between individual school districts.

Regional cooperatives are not, however, a panacea for the administrative difficulties that plague special education in rural areas. Cooperative arrangements are fraught with controversy over such issues as locus of decision making control, physical location of the unit, and personnel administration. Cooperatives also may experience transportation difficulties and goal displacement and thus fail to increase efficiency and effectiveness. In addition, school districts will sometimes experience a loss of ownership and pride in cooperative programs and may even abrogate all responsibility for special education programs to the cooperative unit.

The need for detailed study of current administrative arrangements regarding special education programs in rural areas is clear (Jordan, 1966; Sanche, 1972; Northwest Regional Development Laboratory, 1973; Moore, 1975; Helge, 1981; Strutz and Monk, 1981; Parks, Ross, and Just, 1982) Hence the purpose of this paper is to systematize and analyze the literature on administrative arrangements regarding special education programs in rural areas. This will be done by examining the literature on administrative arrangements regarding special education programs in rural areas and analyzing the efficacy of each arrangement given the difficulties inherent in administering special education programs in rural areas.

Administrative Arrangements for Special Education in Rural Areas

Within the literature on special education administration in rural areas three topics emerge. These are: the difficulties associated with bringing special education programs to rural areas; the need for research into the field of special education in rural areas; and a concern with cooperative arrangements as a means of providing special education programs in rural areas. Each of these topics will be explored.

Difficulties

As early as 1964, the literature on special education in rural areas recognized the difficulties inherent in serving the needs of handicapped children in sparsely populated areas. Lord and Isenberg (1964) assert that most rural school districts are too small to provide programs to children that constitute a small proportion of the student body population. Jordan (1966) expands on this idea. She states that

> "the existing and traditional arrangements for administering schools in sparsely populated areas do not lend themselves to, and in general preclude the provision of special education services... Local school districts large in geographic area but small in enrollment, are not an appropriate base for administering comprehensive special education programs. Continued district reorganization and consolidation will not substantially alter this lack of appropriateness. Obviously necessary is the development of new administrative patterns that can reconcile these circumstances." (p. 2)

Kirk (1968, p. 40) concurs, adding "in areas where distances are great and children live in regions remote from the cities, the supply of services is difficult and costly." Kirk believes that adequate programs have not been developed because of transportation difficulties, lack of equipment, and the problems associated

with administering special education programs in sparsely populated areas.

Sanche (1972, p.1) asserts that "little success has been achieved in adapting existing urban approaches to rural areas." While Heller (1975, p. 138) believes that "The first challenge placed before special educators in rural areas is how to deliver services to small numbers of handicapped children who may be scattered geographically." Thus, as Sher (1977, p. 51) explains;

> "The problem of education in sparsely populated areas can be quite simply divided into categories: *access* and *quality*. First, rural school children have historically lacked access to services and resources required to meet some educational needs, particularly of an unusual or specialized nature. And second, the resources that *were* available tended to be either inappropriate or simply inferior to those available in metropolitan areas."

With the passage of PL94-142 came an increasing awareness of the difficulties associated with the provision of special education services in rural areas. In a paper by the National Association of Retarded Citizens (1980, p.6), the effective implementation of PL94-142 in rural areas is recognized as a critical challenge to the American educational system. Furthermore, "some of the problems faced today stem from a failure to recognize the essential differences between rural and urban needs."

Schrag (1979, p. 22) believes that "more than anything else, state, federal, and court mandates today raise problems because of the consistency of the requirements and their solid base in law and regulation." And Veselka (1980, p. 26) asserts that;

> "...delivery mechanisms for services to handicapped children must be sensitive to the needs of rural districts often covering large, sparsely populated areas and having special needs in regards to transporta-

tion, provision of facilities and equipment, and availability of highly specialized instructional and related service personnel."

Schrag avers that;

"Providing services to handicapped children is a complex multifaceted problem. Until recently, problems of educational service delivery in urban areas have dominated the literature. As federal and state laws, as well as recent court decisions have emphasized and urged immediate full service to all handicapped children, the issues and problems of program implementation in rural areas have taken on greater visibility and concern."

Wallace (1979 p.4) adds;

"... the major challenge facing rural administration is how to deliver special education effectively to small numbers of handicapped children who are probably scattered geographically. A rural district may contain a wide range of handicapped conditions spread over multiple grade levels; few teachers can deal with such a diverse array of conditions. Rural districts tend to be those lowest in income and cannot easily supply facilities or special equipment or recruit specialists to provide the range of special education services required by state and federal law."

Helge (1984, p. 295) believes that,

"One of the most significant obstacles to thoroughly assessing the effectiveness of rural special education services has been the absence of a consistently applied definition of the term rural among federal agencies, educators, and professional organizations."

The barriers to providing special education services to handicapped children in rural areas are many including: funding inadequacies; difficulty

recruiting and retaining qualified personnel; resistance to change; suspicion of outsiders; parent passivity; underdeveloped special education services; and transportation difficulties associated with large geographic spaces, sparse population, poor road conditions, and geographical barriers (National Association of Retarded Citizens, 1980; Woodburn and Young, 1980; Carlson and Dunn, 1981; Cole and Rankin, 1981; Helge, 1981, 1983; Ondell, 1982; Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler, and Sweeney, 1984). Cole and Rankin (1981, p. 5) add "Rural school administrators lack of information and knowledge of state and federal laws regulating services for exceptional children." to the list.

Thus, "the provision of special programs for handicapped children ... has long been one of the knottiest problems for small rural schools." (Carlson and Dunne, 1981), with the need to develop cost effective delivery systems for special education well recognized (Northwest Regional Development Laboratory, 1973; Moore, 1975; National Association for Retarded Citizens, 1980; Cole, Smith, & Rankin, 1981; Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler & Sweeney, 1984).

Research

A second topic that emerges in the literature on administration of special education programs in rural areas is the need for research. As Jordan (1966, p. 1) declares,

> "there are practically no research and almost no guidelines to the provision of special education programs for youth in geographic areas characterized by great space and few people. Most of the current special education programs are designed to serve clusters of children with similar exceptionalities... These programs fall far short of providing equal educational opportunities for those exceptional children who reside in sparsely populated areas."

Jordan further believes that

> "the research field faces a challenge to find new and successful ideas in the provision of special education programs to those children, who, for geographical reasons, have too long been denied educational opportunities that would prepare them for satisfying and responsible adulthood" (p.3). Hensley (1966, p.11) echoes this position calling for "detailed study of current administrative programs, regional programs, and joint agreements."

Sanche (1972) quotes Jordan and states that little progress has been made since 1966. Urban (1972)concurs. In addition, he asserts that most of the literature should be considered scholarship rather than research, a statement that is upheld by Sanche's assertion that most studies in the area of special education in rural areas are descriptive rather than empirical. Thus, Urban believes "a continued emphasis on the area of special education for handicapped children in rural areas is both necessary and desirable because of the problem's importance and the paucity of information in this area." (p. 18) Because, as Heller (1974, P. 137) asserts,

> "One only needs to survey the literature to determine how obscured it really has been and still is; yet, a great segment of our population of children, both normal and handicapped, reside in rural populated areas. These children are fast becoming a minority group in terms of our nation's educational objectives and focus The literature continues to ignore them and federal and state education agencies are much more acutely aware of the problems facing large cities than they are of the smaller towns and/or villages with 1,000 to 2,000 less population."

Further, as Achilles, Hughes and Leonard (1974, p. 220) suggest,

> "the concept of regionalism by itself will not provide a basis for equality of educational opportunity between and among regions. It stands to reason that if all regions develop a system of RESAs, the inequality between districts will be reflected in the inequality of the RESAs. Obviously, a RESA can only reflect the relative capacity of its constituent districts."

In addition, "... the geographic and social isolation of rural areas frequently, makes the local school and its leadership more responsive to local norms and demands than to delivery system goals." (Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler, and Sweeney, 1984, p. 306)

Helge (1979, p. 7) believes that,

> "... due to the paucity of information about problems in rural education in general, and rural special education in particular, the small amount of information which has been available, has generally been idiosyncratic to a particular subculture, district, or state structure. Because there has been almost no systematic data gathering by federal or other national agencies within rural districts, there has been a tendency to extrapolate information about very diverse districts or states to other rural subcultures."

This paucity of information, according to Wallace (1979, p. 20) occurs because,

> "Despite the substantial proportion of students who attend school in rural districts, an infinitesimal share of the federal education research budget has been devoted to the study of rural issues. Debates and decisions about rural education... are often based on competing myths and ideologies rather than objective data and systematic analysis. Improving the educational opportunities of all rural

youngsters requires a substantial effort in which the federal government should assume leadership."

Moore, (1975, p. 137) states that a need exists to "evaluate and document present rural special education programs operating under state and federal guidelines to demonstrate the areas of ineffectiveness and the resulting inflexible cost and service patterns." Sher, (1977, p. 128) calls for "the development and testing of new delivery system models for basic special and vocational education in sparsely settled areas" as well as "an evaluation of the regional (multidistrict) educational service agency in both theory and practice." While Strutz and Monk (1981) call for research on rural school management structures to determine the most effective organizational patterns for small districts.

Parks, Ross, and Just (1982, p. 185) agree that a need exists to evaluate alternatives that work in rural areas. They believe it desirable to "develop distinctly rural models for providing students with adequate curricula and services." While Helge (1984, p. 305) supports investigation and information dissemination concerning alternative service delivery systems that are effective and, when possible, cost effective." Thus, the need for research into administrative arrangements for special education in rural areas continues today.

Cooperative Arrangements

Lord and Isenberg (1964, p.11) aver that,

"the greatest barrier to expanding and extending special education service programs in areas where they are not now provided is not really any tendency to discount their value and potential contribution to children and communities. Neither is it the absence of an adequate structure to administer the programs, even though this is a definite lack. The major obstacle seems to be the unwillingness of those

working at all levels in our state system of schools to acknowledge that the traditional local school district by local school district approach cannot do the job. A realistic review of school district organization in any state can only lead to this conclusion."

Gearheart (1967, p. 49) echoes the need for a different type of administrative arrangement. He believes that "if there is any hope of extending special services to smaller school districts, it is through the development of some type of inter-district plan." Kirk (1968, p. 48) concurs, stating that "the development of cooperative regional administrative units should be established on a multi-school basis."

While some type of inter-district plan is generally called for (Burrello and Sage, 1979; Wallace, 1979; Edington, 1980; Helge, 1980; Klees and Jess, 1980; Seager et. al., 1980; Veselka, 1980; Woodburn and Young, 1980; Sloan and Nolin, 1981; Bohrson, 1982; Cole, Smith and Rankin, 1982; Mayer, 1982; Helge, 1984), the recognition exists that "there is more than one way to develop an area service program" (Lord and Isenberg, 1964, p. 20). As Burrello and Sage (1979, p. 137) inform us, "Intermediate units vary among states on a number of dimensions such as scope of program involvement, governance, fiscal base, and organizational structure."

Wallace (1979, p. 19) suggests;

"How states organize systems of education to deliver services is the business of the respective states and not a matter of federal policy. Assuring that whatever delivery system a state elects leads to the equitable distribution of high quality services, however, is the fundamental federal interest. Various forms of educational service agencies (e.g. special district ESAs, cooperative ESAs, regionalized SEA/ESA) presently operating in many states are demonstrating their potential

for delivering services to rural schools. This is especially true in the important areas of educating people with handicapping conditions."

Throughout the literature on administration of special education programs in rural areas, various inter-district plans are reviewed along with prerequisites and barriers to successful programs. Hence, in this section, prerequisites for cooperation will be explored; various types of administrative arrangements will be examined; and the difficulties associated with cooperative programs will be delineated.

Prerequisites. Lord and Isenberg (1964, p.16) state that for a cooperative to succeed there is a need for dedicated leadership with "a vision of potential and confidence in ultimate success not only on the part of those willing to devote their time but by all would-be members as well." Gearheart (1967, p. 49) believes that "An absolute prerequisite to any type of joint school district planning is the legislation making such planning possible." Loveless (1967) and Kohl (1970) assert that for a cooperative to succeed it must provide either better or cheaper services than the individual school district. Vuillemot (1967, p.11) avers that the essential ingredients for a successful district are (1) cooperation and (2) leadership.

The Exception Children Conference Papers (1970, p. 11) explain that "the greatest deterrent to good regional development is man's unwillingness to cooperate." Vuillemot (1967, p. 10) believes that "difficulties arise when member school districts retain all control and will not assign the cooperative districts those responsibilities it needs to conduct a cooperative program." In addition, "inept leadership increases lack of cooperation and "snowball" of failures grows rapidly" (Vuillemot, 1967, p.1). Hence, as Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler, and Sweeney (1984, p. 311) indicate: "Districts must "own" the delivery system. There must be clarity of mission. Certain persistent problems are to be expected and

should be given frequent attention." Additionally, "School districts must feel that the ESD [Educational Service District] respects and protects the autonomy of the local district." (Multnomah County Educational Service District, 1980, p. 8). Hence, for cooperative ventures to succeed it is imperative that a high degree of mutual trust be established.

The basis for cooperatives, according to Sloan and Nolin (1980), are the theories of exchange and power dependency. According to exchange theory, each district has something that the others need. By assigning the cooperative certain rights, a power dependency is established. Hence, according to these theories, the creation of a cooperative should lead to a high degree of cooperation and problem solving. Therefore, as Klees and Jess (1980, p. 37) elucidate, "As small districts develop these cooperative consortiums, all educators must be willing to replace individual district parochialism with mutual concern and sharing of responsibilities and resources."

According to Kirmer, Lockwood, and Sweeney (1984, p. 312) "Systematic planning must be built into the operation and decision-making of the delivery system. Such planning must strive for clarity of program goals, processes, and structures, and must try to ensure that the necessary resources and conditions are in place."

In a survey of assistant secretaries of federal agencies related to rural education (Helge, 1981), participants felt strong needs for role clarification among all involved agencies so that the organizations they represented could most effectively engage in cooperative efforts. Hence, Helge (1984, p. 304) proposes the following eight prerequisites for successful cooperative ventures:

> "(a) decentralization of services wherever possible, real delegation of authority as well as responsibility, and an emphasis on local ownership and commitment; (b) creation of staff roles that emphasize networking

to accomplish service delivery; (c) clearly established goals, policies, and accountability systems and staff job descriptions; (d) responsibility for regular as well as special education aspects of service delivery whenever practical; (e) realistic perspective regarding interagency collaboration and district motivation to become involved; (f) open agenda setting; (g) creation of local support for change across the collaborative so that local agenda do not conflict with those of the collaborative; and (h) allowing for divergent goals of each unit of the collaborative."

Thus, it becomes apparent that successful cooperative ventures may prove difficult to achieve.

Typologies With the recognition that more than one way existed to provide special education services in sparsely populated areas, came the formation of typologies for provision of such services. In the literature seven typologies emerge. Each of these typologies will be reviewed along with the terminological difficulties that ensue.

Lord and Isenberg (1964) begin their typology with state plans for the administration of special education services in rural areas. They assert that currently, state departments of education exist and have the responsibility for special education programming. Hence, they believe that state administration of these programs may be desirable as in this manner the costs, that tend to be high for small districts, would be offset. These authors list difficulties associated with state administration of local special education programs. They view the primary difficulties as: (1) distance that can slow response time. This in turn may hamper question resolution as well as prove cumbersome in the handling of crisis situations; and (2) the need for states to provide equality of opportunity. This may impede districts with advanced special education ser-

vices as well as precluding "lighthouse" programs. While Lord and Isenberg do discuss the possibility of regional offices, they do not feel that this arrangement provides sufficient advantages over the centralized state plan as decision making remains centralized . Hence, Lord and Isenberg do not appear to support state operation of regionalized special education programming, especially given that program continuity under such arrangements would be subject to legislative whims.

The second type of multi-district program discussed by Lord and Isenberg is the cooperative. They believe the cooperative is "a concept directly applicable to the need for developing service programs that school districts individually cannot provide with efficiency and economy" (p. 15). On the negative side, Lord and Isenberg state that cooperatives tend to be single purpose agencies that may prove difficult to expand. In addition, cooperatives are not part of the formal state system, and as such receive no direct funding.

Lord and Isenberg continue by depicting special school districts that are limited to special services and generally encompass several school districts. Advantages of this arrangement include: state assistance for establishing such districts; an adequate base of operation; a local agency responsible for service; and no local charge for services offered. However, special school districts do have a large constituency with differing views which may serve to impede program development and implementation. Additionally, special school districts must only provide the designated specialized service and cannot expand. The need for additional services requires the formation of a new district whose boundaries may or may not be coterminous with the first district.

The intermediate administrative unit, according to Lord and Isenberg, is a broad and general concept. This type of unit is the middle of a three tier state system and may or may not be a county school district. The intermediate unit

serves a wide range of functions. Its primary advantages include: a regional basis; adaptability; and placement in the direct stream of the state educational organization.

While Lord and Isenberg present one typology for area service, Vuillemot (1967) presents another. For Vuillemot, special education districts, cooperative districts, and intermediate districts are termed equivalents and defined as a combination of local school districts within a county or more than one county with a student population of at least 15,000 containing at least one high school district and its feeder elementary districts. County school districts form the second type of area service agency. The third type, joint agreement cooperatives are defined as an undertaking between two or more special education districts to provide services to students with low incidence handicaps. The last type of administrative arrangement discussed by Vuillemot is the administrative district which is defined as one district taking administrative responsibility for special education programs undertaken by a group of neighboring school districts.

Hughes et. al. (1971) proposes a three type typology. The first type, the intermediate education service unit, is equivalent to Lord and Isenberg's intermediate administrative unit. Whether serving a single or a multicounty region, "The primary role of these units is to offer programs and services to aid local school districts in providing equal educational opportunities for all students within the service area." (p. 46) In addition, "...those intermediate units which do *not* have a state regulatory function operate more effectively with the local education agency and are seen as providing services *to* and not *for* the local education agency."

The second type of administrative agency discussed by Hughes et. al. is the voluntary education cooperative. This type of cooperative is in no way man-

dated by legislation or regulation. These units "...generally try to coordinate or harness the strengths and capacities of the constituents to develop, or generate a structure to provide flexibility, power potential and direction for change and innovation." (p. 11) These units "have often been formed in response to local awareness that each local school may be unable to meet the needs of the community it serves, and that a number of contiguous school districts have the same or similar needs and problems." (p. 61)

The third type proposed by Hughes et al., the

> ".. school study council (also often called school development council) is a group of local school systems loosely confederated, usually under the sponsorship of a college of education, organized for the purpose of solving defined educational problems existing in member schools. Although different in organization from other educational cooperatives, it is formed for the same purposes, i.e., it aims to accomplish through shared resources that which could not be accomplished singly. Major differences seem to lie in the nature and kind of services that are shared and in the unique role of higher education." (p. 12)

Terminological difficulties become apparent in Urban's typology where the first type of administrative district, the satellite cooperative, is equivalent to Vuillemot's administrative district. Urban's 's second type, the joint agreement cooperative is vastly different from the one described by Vuillemot. For Urban, the joint agreement cooperative is defined as an undertaking to provide special education services on a regional basis by two or more local school districts. The new agency has the sole purpose of providing regional services. Administrative authority remains at the local level. Urban completes his typology with the true cooperative which he defines as the delegation of authority by local school districts to a new unit that undertakes responsibility for provision and

administration of special education programs.

Sanche (1972) provides a typology with four common designs; (1) the individual school district, (2) the host school district, (equivalent to Urban's satellite district and Vuillemot's administrative district), (3) the service agency (equivalent to Urban's joint agreement cooperative), and (4) the formal intermediate unit (equivalent to Lord and Isenberg's intermediate unit and Hughes et. al. intermediate education service unit.)

Mayer (1982) provides six organizational models for special education. The first model, comprehensive direct program operation, is defined as an LEA [local education association] independently operating its own programs to serve all handicapped children. This model is used only by LEAs with a large population base and is not seen as feasible for the small rural district.

In the second, limited direct program operation, local school districts operate programs or services only for selected types of individuals with exceptional needs while contracting with state and private facilities to provide services for all other students. Mayer states that geographically isolated LEAs may find this model the only feasible way to meet their commitments.

Mayer's third model, reciprocal plans, involves LEAs in close proximity informally agreeing to have each one operate a part of the total program and to accept one anothers low incidence handicapped students on a cost-of-operation basis. Each district would operate its own programs for students with high incidence handicaps. Mayer states that interdistrict agreements for attendance and cost reimbursement are usually adequate for this type of program. However, "Difficulty may arise (1) when some programs are more expensive than others, (2) when participating districts differ greatly in socioeconomic level or ethnic and racial makeup, or (3) from other unforseen factors" Mayer views reciprocal plans as feasible for small to medium sized LEAs where geo-

graphic distances are not so great as to prohibit daily transportation of students.

Mayer's fourth model, cooperative plans, are more formal than the reciprocal plan. It is based on state laws and/or on formal agreements between LEAs. The cooperative plan operates as a program rather than a cluster of independent programs. Cooperative plans have a governing board (often representative of the component LEAs) and their own administrative/support staff and teachers. This model also provides for a budgeting process separated from, but sometimes dependent on, the component LEAs. Cooperative models take different forms in different states and are generally used by small and medium sized LEAs that are required by law or find it more efficient to work together to provide a full spectrum of services.

Mayer's fifth model, dependent plans, is viewed as appropriate only for very small LEAs that can receive quality services from a neighboring district or an intermediate district. In this plan, LEAs that are so small that they feel unable to provide quality programs depend on a larger neighbor or on an intermediate district to provide all special education programs or services. While Mayer views this as acceptable for the very small LEA he sees it as much less defensible for the larger district that adopts a dependent plan simply because of a "don't want to be involved" philosophy.

Mayers sixth model, a combination of plans, is viewed as being widely used by LEAs because of its adaptability to local situations. He sees this model as arising because local considerations frequently indicate that some combination of plans will best meet the district's needs.

Helge (1984, p. 301) cites four types of collaborative structures that facilitate the development of special education services. These are:

"(1) state mandated special district systems and educational service

agencies;

(2) cooperatives formed by local initiative; (3) regional or decentralized state educational agency systems providing no direct services; (4) other interorganizational structures including district contracts with private or community agencies; cooperatives; LEA agreements, interstate collaboratives, and other unique arrangements.

As is readily apparent, the terminology regarding multi-district service plans becomes confusing when attempting to categorize programs. Not only are different names given to the same arrangement, different arrangements are given the same name. To clarify seven types of regional service plans are presented in the literature on administration of special education programs in rural areas. These are; (1) state plans, including regionalized state offices (Lord and Isenberg), (2) true cooperatives (Urban), (3) special school districts (Lord and Isenberg), (4) formal intermediate units (Sanche), (5) satellite cooperatives (Urban) (6) joint agreement cooperatives (Urban), and (7) school study councils (Hughes et. al.)

All of the above cooperative arrangements are viewed as feasible and in existence in various parts of the country. As Lord and Isenberg (1964, p. 21) assert, "The success of any regionalized service undertaking depends to a large extent on the organizational framework which permits its development." They continue by listing eight general characteristics deemed desirable to assure efficient operation. These are:

- "Broad and comprehensive responsibility for both elementary and secondary education and their specialized aspects.
- Broad and generally oriented professional administration.
- An area of operation large enough to permit the efficient development of most services local school districts cannot provide for themselves.

- Adequate and dependable financial support with some degree of flexibility in its use.
- The ability to adapt programs and direction as circumstances and needs change.
- A sufficient stability to assure continuation of services in spite of changes and realignments among participating local school systems.
- A responsiveness to the needs and desires of local school systems as seen from the local level.
- The ability to secure a staff sufficiently competent to have something substantially worthwhile to offer participating districts." (p.21)

Lord and Isenberg conclude by asserting that "Any regionalized approach meeting such general characteristics in its organization and operation, assuming appropriate facilities and equipment for whatever it undertakes, is certain to extend educational opportunities far beyond what local school systems will ever be able to do by themselves."

Cooperative Difficulties. While cooperative ventures have been fostered by PL94-142 requirements, state incentives, and the search for cost efficiency, it is recognized that cooperatives do not provide a panacea for the difficulties that plague special education programs in rural areas. As Burrello and Sage (1979, p. 137) point out:

> "In most instances the IEU [Intermediated Educational Unit] development has been in response to unmet needs. These needs have tended to be focused around a particular service, such as special education or vocational education. As a result, the IEU has tended to provide for special services only, rather than become an integral part of the entire educational system. Where this has been the case... the limited scope places the agency and the leadership personnel in a tangential

role, somewhat apart from the other major business of the regular school system."

Furthermore, as Achilles, Hughes, and Leonard (1974, p.220) evince;

> "... the concept of regionalism by itself will not provide a basis for equality of educational opportunity between and among regions. At best, regionalism can help provide equality of opportunity to school districts within a region. It stands to reason that if all regions develop systems of RESAs [Regional Education Service Agency], the inequality between districts will reflect the inequalities of the RESAs. Obviously, a RESA can only reflect the relative capacity of its constituent districts."

In addition "... the geographic and social isolation of rural areas makes the local school and its leadership more responsive to local norms and demands than to delivery system goals." (Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler and Sweeney, 1984, p.308) Thus, as Helge (1981) explains;

> "... although decision makers may view IAC [Interagency Cooperative] arrangements as opportunities to increase their efficiency and ability to achieve organizational goals, much of the current literature on collaboratives is based on unrealistic assumptions of rationalistic, goal-oriented organizations seeking to maximize their utilities through cooperation."

The Exceptional Children Conference Papers (1970, p. 11) report that "setting up interdistrict cooperatives for piecemeal services is costly and only minimally useful in helping children." And Sanche (1972, p. 4) asserts that "While this approach provides a partial solution to the sparsity problem it tends to break down when topography and population become extreme." Because, as Weatherman and Hollingsworth (1975, p.89) indicate, "... children with unusual

or very different problems then constitute a very small proportion of the school population." And, as Sher (1977, p.60) points out, "regional centers are "far less acceptable to the parents of young children for special education." as well as proving "impossible for the more severely handicapped" (Seager et. al., 1980). This situation arises because "In most rural areas as much as a 200 mile radius may be necessary to find enough handicapped children to justify a special facility or program." (Veselka, 1980, p. 40) thereby hampering the utility of the intermediate school district (Strutz and Monk, 1980)

Ondell (1982, p.4) lists six variables thought to impede the development and effectiveness of programs in rural areas. These are: (1) lack of organizational readiness; (2) system shock, defined as the need for readjustment of role relationships due to the introduction of new roles; (3) interpersonal road blocks; (4) lack of trained personnel; (5) transportation difficulties; and (6) a lower tax base with which to build and finance quality programs. While Helge (1984, p. 303) lists eleven impediments to collaborative efficiency: (1) goal displacement that occurs when cost efficiency becomes the overriding goal of the administrative structure; (2) cumbersome bureaucratic layers and political structures designed to facilitate services can actually isolate students from services and unnecessarily involve service providers in political battles; (3) the separate fiscal status of LEAs and the collaborative can cause instability for the local district; (4) the need to establish effective relationships between the collaborative and each district, (5) the ability of shared personnel to cover vast distances effectively including the inability of supervisory staff hired by the collaborative to impact district special education personnel; (6) local school district personnel abrogating responsibility by allocating all responsibility for handicapped students to the cooperative; (7) lack of acceptance of program specialist and staff burnout; (8) accountability systems that differ from the formal

organizational chart; (9) the difficulty of parental involvement and communication caused by distance; (10) inconsistent quality of service across the collaborative; (11) the existence of hidden agendas that arise because each district feels ultimately responsible to the local community. Hence true change across a collaborative is difficult in the midst of competing local priorities.

Thus, it becomes apparent that cooperative ventures are fraught with difficulties and may fail to provide adequate services to handicapped children in rural areas.

Conclusions

Initially the cooperative model appears to offer a panacea for the problem of administering special education programs in rural areas. However, on closer examination, myriad problems arise to plague the cooperative venture.

One difficulty encountered when scrutinizing the cooperative model emerges from its rationale: a cooperative provides a more effective and/or efficient means of meeting one or more local school districts goals. This view, however, has not been ascertained through research and may indeed be misguided especially in light of the high transportation costs that may negate savings in other areas. Other barriers to cooperative arrangements fulfilling effectiveness and efficiency goals are: conflict over cooperative priorities and programs; and the difficulty associated with achieving consensus especially when dealing with a variety of superintendents each of whom may have differing goals and expectations.

Another problem with the efficiency/effectiveness rationale is the possible emergence of cost effectiveness as the overriding goal of the cooperative. When this happens, individual district and student needs may be submerged in the decision making process. This in turn results in inferior programs thereby inhibiting the provision of a greater range of higher quality programs, an area that

should be a major strength of cooperative arrangements.

Another major difficulty is the need to establish harmonious relationships between member school districts and the cooperative. The director of a cooperative finds himself in the difficult position of dealing with a variety of administrators with differing personalities, capabilities, and goals. The director must therefore be extremely skilled in working with people. In addition, the director must be able to engineer interdistrict relationships. Only in this manner can undue conflict over cooperative activities be avoided.

Personnel poses still another potential problem area. Even though cooperatives may be able to attract qualified special education personnel, the literature indicates a yearly attrition rate of thirty to fifty percent of all special education personnel in rural areas. Some explanations for this phenomenon include: the large amount of travel required; the lack of time allocated for required paperwork; unclear lines of responsibility; and the lack of resources inherent in rural areas.

Considering all the potential difficulties, the efficacy of the cooperative model for the administration of special education programs in rural areas is certainly questionable. The need for continued research into this area is apparent. Only through intensified research will it be determined whether cooperative arrangements have fulfilled their promise of providing more efficient and effective special education programs to handicapped children residing in rural areas.

The Efficacy of Special Education Cooperative Arrangements in Rural Areas

Within the literature on administration of special education programs in rural areas, seven cooperative models emerge along with prerequisites and barriers to successful cooperative ventures. In this section, the components deemed necessary for a successful rural special education cooperative will first be delineated. Next, each of the cooperative models will be examined in terms of the proposed components. Finally a recommendation will be made regarding the efficacy of cooperative arrangements for the administration of special education programs in rural areas.

Necessary Components

For any cooperative venture to succeed, Gearheart (1967) believes it necessary to first have the legislation making such planning possible. Currently, 33 states have some type of legislation concerning multi-school district ventures. This legislation is viewed as imperative as it provides the framework on which to build a cooperative model as well as allowing the cooperative to become an integral part of the state educational system (Burrello and Sage, 1979).

Because of the diversity of rural areas and the differing needs of local school districts, permissive rather than mandatory legislation is recommended. The rationale behind this position is that through permissive rather than mandatory legislation, local school districts will maintain a greater sense of ownership and pride in cooperative ventures. Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler, and Sweeney (1984) and Helge(1984) maintain that local school "ownership" of cooperative programs is an essential component for the successful cooperative endeavor.

The issue of local ownership of cooperative programs leads to the need for a spirit of cooperation among member school districts if the local cooperative

arrangement is to succeed (Vuillemot, 1967; Exceptional Children Conference Papers, 1970; Helge, 1984). Klees and Jess (1980) view a spirit of cooperation as essential because only in this manner can mutual concern replace: individual district parochialism; adherence to local norms; and the existence of hidden agendas. In addition, a spirit of cooperation should lead to the real delegation of authority as well as the assigning of responsibility to the cooperative district (Helge, 1984) while concurrently hindering local school district abrogation of responsibility for special education programs to the cooperative district and protecting local school district autonomy (Multnomah County Education Service District, 1980; Helge, 1984).

Still another necessary component for a successful cooperative venture is dedicated leadership (Lord and Isenberg, 1964; Vuillemot, 1967). Dedicated leadership is deemed essential for cooperative responsiveness to local norms (Lord and Isenberg) as well as allowing for the creation of divergent goals to meet the unique needs of member school districts (Helge, 1984). In addition, strong leadership will aid in establishing the stability essential for continued cooperative success.

In order for any cooperative venture to succeed, clarity of mission coupled with ongoing planning and attention to persistent problems is needed (Kirmer, Lockwood, Mickler, and Sweeney, 1984). In this manner, divergent goals can be accommodated and responsiveness to local needs maintained thereby providing further stability for cooperative programs.

Another important component for cooperative success is role clarification (Helge, 1984). Only through clearly established overt lines of responsibility can cooperative personnel hope to be accepted by local school district personnel and subsequently improve the delivery of services to handicapped children residing in rural areas.

Adequate financing is yet another essential component for the successful rural special education cooperative. Rural districts often suffer from a low tax base. This in turn can lead to inadequate financing for cooperative ventures that in turn can create cooperative instability, piecemeal programs, and lack of program continuity. Furthermore, it must be remembered that cooperative enterprises tend to break down when topography and population become extreme (Sanche, 1972; Strutz and Monk, 1980).

To summarize, ten components emerge as necessary for a successful rural special education cooperative. These are: (1) legislation enabling cooperative development; (2) maintenance of local ownership of cooperative programs; (3) a spirit of cooperation among member school districts; (4) protection of local autonomy; (5) dedicated leadership; (6) mission clarity; (7) ongoing planning; (8) clear lines of responsibility; (9) real delegation of authority and responsibility to the cooperative unit; and (10) an adequate financial base.

Model Adherence to Proposed Components

In the literature on special education administration in rural areas seven types of cooperative venture are delineated. These are: (1) state plans; (2) true cooperatives; (3) special school districts; (4) formal intermediate units; (5) satellite cooperatives; (6) joint agreement cooperatives; and (7) school study councils. In this section, each of the above arrangements will be examined in terms of the components deemed necessary for the successful rural special education cooperative.

State plans. State plans for the administration of special education programs in rural areas include the use of regional service centers. According to this model, the state maintains responsibility for local special education programs. Clearly, the state has responsibility for the education of all children including the handicapped. Legislation exists to this effect. The state is able to

provide strong leadership, clarity of mission, and ongoing planning. Additionally, the state should be able to muster adequate financial support for special education programs, although the adequacy of funding may be subject to legislative whims (Lord and Isenberg, 1964). Unfortunately, state plans fail to maintain local ownership of cooperative programs. Rural people are often distrustful of state and federal agencies. This could serve to impede the development of the spirit of cooperation deemed necessary for a successful cooperative program. In addition, use of the state for problem resolution may impede the establishment of clear lines of responsibility, hamper problem resolution, and fail to be responsive to local needs. Hence, state plans do not possess all the components deemed necessary for a successful rural special education cooperative.

True cooperatives. The true cooperative involves the delegation of authority by local school districts to a new unit that undertakes responsibility for the provision and administration of special education programs. Given its structure, the true cooperative, that involves a real delegation of authority, should maintain local ownership of special education programs while fostering a spirit of cooperation. Although true cooperatives can be formed without specific legislation, permissive legislation would in no way hamper their formation and could even foster this type of collaboration. In addition given the voluntary commitment of the local school district to the cooperative, adequate financial support for cooperative programs should not prove problematic.

Most true cooperatives have some form of governing board comprised of local school district personnel. Through this board, clarity of mission, ongoing planning, and clear lines of authority could be established. Furthermore, this board could provide the type of leadership necessary to maintain cooperative effectiveness. Hence, the true cooperative has the potential to provide all the

components deemed necessary for a successful rural special education cooperative.

Special school districts. Special school districts generally encompass several school districts and are limited to designated services. Hence clarity of mission exists. In addition, the formation of special school districts is enabled by state legislation that generally provides for an adequate financial base. Furthermore, special school districts provide a local agency that may aid in providing leadership, clear lines of responsibility and ongoing planning.

Special school districts must provide only the designated services that caused their formation. Hence they can neither expand nor respond to local school districts needs, thereby opening the possibility for loss of local ownership and pride in special school district programs. In addition, special school districts fail to engender a spirit of cooperation and preserve local school district autonomy. Hence the special school district fails to provide all the components deemed necessary for a successful cooperative endeavor.

Formal intermediate units. The formal intermediate unit is the middle of a three tier state educational system and may serve a single or multi-county region. The primary role of these units is to offer programs and services to aid local school districts in providing an equal educational opportunity for all children residing within the service areas. Formal intermediate units are enabled by legislation and generally engender an adequate base of financial support. Their placement in the state educational system enables clear lines of responsibility as well as role clarification. These units have a regional basis and as such can adapt to local school district needs thereby preserving local autonomy. Furthermore, formal intermediate units are able to provide leadership, clarity of mission, and ongoing planning.

Unfortunately, intermediate units as part of the state educational system

are thrust upon the local school district. This may hamper feelings of local ownership and pride in cooperative endeavors as well as impeding the spirit of cooperation necessary for the successful administration of special education programs in rural areas.

Satellite cooperatives. The satellite cooperative is defined as one district taking administrative responsibility for special education programs undertaken be a group of neighboring school districts. While legislation is not necessary for this type of arrangement, permissive legislation would not hamper satellite cooperative formation.

Satellite cooperatives maintain local ownership of cooperative programs, foster a spirit of cooperation, and protect local autonomy. Administrative authority is delegated to one of the districts. This district then assumes responsibility for special education programs. The administrative district in turn provides leadership for special education programs.

Through the administrative district, satellite cooperatives are able to provide ongoing planning, clarity of mission, and clear lines of responsibility.

Financial support for satellite cooperatives is tied to local school district funding. However, given the cooperative spirit necessary for the formation of the satellite cooperative as well as the maintenance of local autonomy, adequate funding for satellite programs should not prove problematic. Hence, satellite cooperatives have the potential to provide all the components necessary for the successful administration of special education programs in rural areas.

Joint Agreement Cooperatives. The joint agreement cooperative is an undertaking to provide special education services on a regional basis by two or more local school districts. According to this model, local ownership, preservation of local autonomy, and a spirit of cooperation exist.

While legislation may or may not exist, administrative authority for this type of cooperative remains with the local school district and the cooperative is relegated to the sole position of service agency. While clarity of mission regarding services desired may be provided along with ongoing planning, effective leadership is hampered by the cooperative role as an advisory rather than administrative agency. This situation can lead to role ambiguity and muddled lines of authority that can further hamper cooperative effectiveness. Thus, the joint agreement cooperative lacks some of the components deemed necessary for the effective administration of special education programs in rural areas.

School study councils. School study councils, also called school development councils, are a group of local school districts loosely confederated, usually under the sponsorship of a college of education. These councils are organized for the sole purpose of solving defined educational problems that exist in member school districts. While legislation is not delineated for this model, permissive legislation would not appear to hamper the formation of school study councils.

School study councils preserve local ownership of programs along with local autonomy. In addition, a spirit of cooperation exists between each member school and the sponsoring agency. However, this type of arrangement appears to be a cooperative venture between each school and the sponsoring agency for the purpose of solving local problems. Hence, the leadership and planning roles are not clearly delineated although it would be possible for such functions to be relegated to the sponsoring agency. Additionally, the loose confederation of the school study council does not appear to permit the delegation of authority or the formation of clear lines of responsibility. Thus, school study councils fail to possess all the necessary components to successfully administer special education programs in rural areas.

Summary and Recommendations

Of the seven cooperative models for the administration of special education in rural areas presented in the literature, only two; the true cooperative, and the satellite cooperative, appear to possess all the components deemed necessary for the successful administration of special education programs in rural areas. The choice of model is dependent on the specific situation of a given rural area. In this section, the efficacy of each of these models will be explored further.

In the satellite cooperative, the administrative role is delegated to an existing rural school district. This situation would create a power dependency and exchange relationship. The satellite cooperative appears feasible only in an area where a larger rural school district is surrounded by several smaller school districts that are willing to embark on such an endeavor. The rationale behind this position is that most rural school districts lack the necessary resources to attract the personnel needed to successfully administer special education programs. Given the school consolidation movement of the past ten years, this type of situation is becoming increasingly rare. In addition, the formation of satellite cooperatives may be hampered by local school district perception that formation of a satellite cooperative could lead to further consolidation or even threaten the very existence of the individual rural district. Thus, while having the potential to successfully provide and administer special education programs in rural areas, satellite cooperatives are not without problems.

The true cooperative, in which administrative authority is delegated by the local school district to a new administrative unit, eliminates the threat of consolidation posed by the satellite cooperative. However, the true cooperative is not free from possible impediments. Once authority for special education pro-

grams has been delegated to the cooperative, it becomes possible for local school districts to abrogate responsibility for these programs to the cooperative unit. Along with the abrogation of responsibility comes the loss of ownership and pride in cooperative programs. Only through strong leadership, clarity of mission, clear lines of responsibility, and ongoing planning can this situation be avoided. In addition, while the satellite cooperative is generally compact, the possibility exists that the true cooperative will cover such vast geographical distances that its effectiveness will be hampered by topography and transportation difficulties.

Thus both models deemed feasible for the administration of special education programs in rural areas are not free from accompanying difficulties. Consequently, the choice of administrative model must remain situation specific. And, regardless of administrative model employed, careful monitoring to insure efficiency, effectiveness, and responsiveness to local school district needs is recommended.

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This article describes the performance objectives and delivery system of a regional model employing eight curriculum resource teachers.

Gearheart, B. R., *Administration of Special Education*, Charles C. Thomas Publisher, Springfield, Illinois , 1967.

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Helge, Doris, *Final Project Report of the National Rural Research Project. 1978-1979 Special Project.*, Murray State University, Murray, Kentucky, 1979. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 182 085.

To identify workable strategies for rural special education delivery systems, a survey was conducted among state and local education agencies in 19 states representing all major economic and cultural groups in the 50 states. Questionnaires were developed to obtain characteristics of the school district, the area served, and the school special education clients; to identify the special education strategies used and their relationship to the major components of PL94-142; and to determine the cost factors of delivery systems.

Helge, Doris, *National Research Comparing Rural Special Education Delivery Systems Before and After Implementation of the Education of All Handicapped Children's Act*, Murray State University Center for Innovation and Development, Murray, Kentucky, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 200 385.

Major findings are presented of a national comparative study with two primary objectives: first, to identify performance of rural special education delivery systems prior to the 1975 enactment of PL94-142 and again during the 1979-1980 school year in providing a free appropriate public education for all handicapped children; and second, to identify facilitating and hindering factors that operate to determine the success or failure of district/cooperative compliance with PL94-142.

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National Association for Retarded Citizens, *Effective Approaches to Implementing Public Law 94-142 in Rural Areas.*, National Association of Retarded Citizens, Research and Demonstration Unit, Arlington, Texas, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service NO. ED 201 123

This summary of a discussion from a 1980 conference on implementing PL94-142 in rural areas focuses on the problems facing special education in rural, remote, and isolated regions and suggests action for change.

Ondell, Vicky L., *Delivery of Services to Handicapped Children in Rural and Sparsely Populated Areas*, Indiana University, Indiana, 1982.

This publication elucidates factors hindering rural service delivery to handicapped children. A continuum of services for rural areas is presented.

Parks, Gail, Peggy J. Ross, and Ann E. Just, "Education," in *Rural Sociology in the United States: Issues for the 80's*, pp. 185-195, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1982.

This chapter calls for research into distinct rural issues rather than the adoption or urban models in rural areas.

Phillipp, Louise, *Let's Go Rural: Influencing Decision Makers. Making it Work in Rural Areas. A Rural Network Monograph.*, Western Illinois University Macomb College of Education, Macomb, Illinois, 1981. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 205 341.

Several targets, tools and strategies are delineated for the novice director of programs for preschool handicapped children in rural isolated areas.

Powell, Richard K., *The Problem of Regional Educational Service Centers in the United States of America with Special Reference to the Seventh-Day Adventist School System., A Descriptive Study.*, University of South Africa, Pretoria, South Africa, 1974. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 107 442.

This study explored sociological, philosophical, and demographic features of American life related to general educational trends and the cooperative approach; the rationale, purpose, organization, and financial and physical aspects of cooperative regional centers; and various denominational needs and solutions via cooperative action.

Sabatino, David, "Special Education Administration in the 80's: A Time for Personal and Professional Renewal," in *Influencing Through Management*, ed. Nancy J. Latini, pp. 27-40, Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1980.

This article discusses the role and function of the special education administrator.

Sanche, Bob and Others, *Implementing the SEECC Model of Special Education Service Delivery in Rural Saskatchewan*, National Congress of the Council for Exceptional Children, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada, 1976. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 158 900.

This document discusses the Saskatoon Region Special Services Project, a cooperative effort to implement the Standards for Educators of Exceptional Children in Canada model. This model stresses special education service delivery for rural areas through regular and resource teachers rather than extensive use of consultants and special classes.

Sanche, Robert P., *Factors Related to the Provision of Special Education in Sparsely Populated Areas*, 1972. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 171 472.

This document discusses research and related studies and lists 12 factors considered critical in the provision of special education in rural areas.

Schrag, Judy and Others, *Education of Handicapped Children in Rural Areas*, Rural Education Seminar, College Park, Maryland, 1979. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 172 982.

This article discusses the challenge involved in delivering special education services to handicapped children in rural areas.

Seager, D. D. and Others, *Important Issues in Rural Education: A Collection of ERIC/CRESS Fact Sheets and Mini Reviews*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Las Cruces, New Mexico, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 191 648.

The two mini reviews and fact sheets contained in this collection synthesize basic information regarding four issues in rural education: special education; transportation; early childhood education; and reading achievement.

Searls, Laura G., *Innovative Programs in Western New York Schools*, State University of New York, Buffalo, New York, 1967. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 021 020.

338 new programs and outstanding practices in school districts in western New York are described.

Sher, Jonathan P., *Education in Rural America*, Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado, 1977.

This book analyzes the beliefs, assumptions, policies, and practices that have shaped, and continue to shape education in Rural America. It concludes that the conventional wisdom in rural education has proved to be more conventional than wise. Pragmatic suggestions for change are offered.

Sher, Jonathan P. and Stuart A. Rosenfeld, *Public Education in Sparsely Populated Areas of the United States*, National Institute of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C., 1977. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 141 006.

This paper is divided into five sections that constitute a state of the art review of education in sparsely populated areas. The five sections attempt: to provide an overview of rural America and its schools in terms of demographics; to examine the school consolidation movement; to explore school finance issues that have particular relevance for rural areas; to address longstanding problems associated with delivering educational services in sparsely populated areas; and to present background information on personnel issues.

Sloan, Charles A. and Reginald S. Nolin, *The Survival of Small and Rural Schools: Concepts and Practices*, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 194 246.

After summarizing the current literature regarding potential school organizational structures and practices, this report outlines the process that was developed and utilized by four small rural school districts in Southern Minnesota.

Sloan, Charles A. and Reginald S. Nolin, "The Survival of Small and Rural Schools: In Search of New Alternatives," *The Rural Educator*, vol. 3, pp. 24-30, 1981.

This article looks at interagency cooperation in terms of exchange and power dependency. The authors theorize that cooperatives should lead to a high degree of cooperation and problem solving.

Southwest and West Central Educational Cooperative Service Unit, *The SW & WC ECSU Past and Present*, Southwest and West Central Educational Cooperative Service Unit, Marshall, Minnesota, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 186 163.

The benefits of regional cooperation among small rural school districts are stressed in this brief description of the Educational Cooperative Service Unit.

Southwest Education Development Laboratory, *R & D Speaks: Rural & Small Schools*, National Institute of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C., 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 197 888.

The goals of this conference were to link the region's educators who are concerned with rural and small schools ar both state and local levels with current research and resources and to identify needs of rural and small schools in the region.

Spellman, Charles R. and Others, *Project PRIDE (Programming Regional Education for Difficult to Educate). Final Report.*, Kansas University, Lawrence, Kansas, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service NO. ED 196 610.

This document describes Project PRIDE, a regional model for providing educational services to severly/profoundly handicapped school-aged individuals in rural southeastern Kansas.

Strutz, Frederick H. and David H. Monk, "New Yorkers Reexamine Rural Schools," *Rural Educator*, vol. 3, pp. 28-37, 1981.

This article describes some of the barriers to cooperative ventures including: staffing difficulties; lack of students; and the need for regulations to be flexible in rural areas.

Urban, Stanley, *Special Education in Rural Areas: An Unsolved Problem*, 1972. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 128 979.

A review of the literature on special education for handicapped children in rural areas is presented. The inadequacy of such provisions is seen as resulting from: transportation difficulties; unavailability of special equipment and teaching materials; and administrative problems. Cooperative programming is seen as the key innovative aspect of most federal programs.

Veselka, Johnny L., *The Delivery of Educational Services: The Small District Problem. A Review of the Literature.*, University of Texas, Austin, Texas, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 193 002.

The review of the literature in this document is directed towards finding ways to improve the curriculum, teaching quality, and general quality of rural/small schools.

Vuillemot, L. D., *Intermediate School Districts. Implications for Special Education.*, Lake County Special Education District, Burnee, Illinois, 1967. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 012 535.

The compounding problems of a special education program in a school district of less than 15,000 population are outlined by the director of special education in an

intermediate school district in Illinois. A variety of adaptive organizational structures are considered.

Wallace, Judi, *The National Seminar on Rural Education*, ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Las Cruces, New Mexico, 1979. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 184 784.

This report covers six areas: equity for rural special education populations; the financial status and needs of rural schools; Vocational and career training in rural schools; delivery systems for rural educational services; assuring the quality of rural school programs; and linking rural development and rural education.

Weatherman, Richard F. and Sue Ann Hollingsworth, ***Administration of Special Education for Rural and Sparsely Populated Areas***, Minnesota University Department of Continuing Education, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1975. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 117 807.

This book is a compilation of papers prepared for a 1975 conference on the delivery of special education services. Because conference participants were from states where problems of distance and low population density complicate delivery of special education programs, a multifaceted approach was used to address these two problems. The book focuses on future trends and current difficulties educators must face in developing programs for handicapped children.

Weber, D. C. and E. S. Rockoff, "The **Relationship Between** Demographic Characteristics of LEAs and Compliance with PL93-380 and PL94:142," ***Journal of Special Education***, vol. 14, pp. 243-251, 1980.

In **this study of 60** Ohio **local education agencies, two factors; the average educa**tional level of special educators and the total number of school-aged children, were positively related to the overall compliance of the LEA with PL93-380 and PL94-142.

Wirtz, Morvin A., ***An Administrator's Handbook of Special Education***, Charles C. Thomas., Springfield, Illinois, 1977.

This general text reviews the history, funding, and program trends for special education from the personnel perspective of the author.

Woodburn, Patricia A. and William J. Young, *P.L. 94-142 and Rural Area Schools: A Case for Consortium.*, Douglas Education Service District, Roseburg, Oregon, 1980. ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 206 438.

To fulfill the mandates of PL94-142 a consortium was organized for special education and related services. 10 steps that a local district must follow to comply with state and federal regulations were identified, and persons responsible for each step were delineated. Background information on development of the model and the consortium program are included.